

NEWS RELEASE from

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March 20, 2003

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIPINSKI STATEMENT ON THE INVASION OF IRAQ

WASHINGTON-U.S. Congressman William Lipinski (D-IL) issued the following statement regarding the invasion of Iraq and the outlook for post-war strategy:

“The decision to go to war was a serious and somber one. I solidly support our troops who will bear the burden of military action. I suspect that their actions will result in a quick resolution of the war.

In October of last year, I voted against the Authorization for Military Force Against Iraq because of the Bush Administration’s disjointed approach and the fact that I could not in good conscience support military force until we first sought UN weapons inspections and the support of the international community. I still feel that the way that the Bush Administration handled this situation was not the best approach. However, considering the large number of American and allied troops and weaponry deployed to the Gulf region, I do not think we could afford to continue to sit back while Saddam Hussein continued to play games with UN weapons inspectors and mock the deadlines for disarmament.

Diplomacy continues to be crucial. The United States should continue diplomacy to assemble the broadest coalition possible to assist our efforts during and after the military conflict. America will especially need the support of our allies to rebuild Iraq. We must begin working immediately with the United Nations and our friends around the world to outline our post-war reconstruction efforts. I fear that during the post-war occupation of Iraq, many of Hussein’s supporters will go into hiding and act as guerrillas, attacking post-conflict troops. I believe that the United States’ and the United Kingdom’s troops would be these guerrillas’ main target. In order to prevent guerrilla attacks in the post-war Iraq, it would be prudent for the United Kingdom and United States to have a predominate presence of behind the scenes support with limited involvement in staffing Iraq. It is my hope that other nations will be proactive in supplying the personnel to rebuild Iraq. We must diligently re-establish relations with the international community so that we may again work harmoniously together to restore peace and avoid war.

As the war with Iraq commences, my thoughts are with our courageous troops and their families and I pray for their safe and swift return home.”

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